(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the efforts being made by Government to provide adequate supply of wheat and mustard seeds to the States under the National Food Security Mission?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government has been continuously reviewing the need for import of wheat and edible oils to ensure adequate availability and stable prices. About 7 million tons of wheat was imported by the public sector agencies during the last two years to take care of the needs of the Public Distribution System, Welfare Schemes, natural calamities, buffer stock etc. Government is also considering subsidized distribution of imported edible oils to benefit consumers, in particular, those belonging to BPL families through the State Governments.

(c) To provide adequate supply of wheat seeds. The National Food Security Mission (NFSM) envisages distribution of seeds at incentivized price, provide small kits of 5 kilogram seeds to some farmers for demonstration purposes and frontline demonstration of new varieties of seeds. Distribution of mustard seeds is not covered under NFSM.

Urban-Centric Economic Growth

2374. SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that the boom in real estate, the stock market and credit driven consumption are only urban-centric; and

(b) if so, the steps being contemplated by Government to boost domestic rural development driven consumption in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) Yes, Sir. There has been an all round growth in the real estate, stock market and credit driven consumption in the economy, some of which is perhaps more urban-centric than rural.

(b) The Government has taken several steps and are proposing some other to boost rural incomes and consumption in the country. These include the launching of the National Food Security Mission (NFSM) and the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) with a view to rejuvenate agriculture and improve farm incomes. In the budget proposal for 2008-09, the Government has announced a number of fiscal measures, including adjustments in personal income tax slabs, reduction in excise rates on a range of consumer goods, waiver of farm loans, all of which are likely to spur consumption in the farm and non-farm sectors of the rural economy. The extension of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme to all districts of the country is also expected to contribute to an increase in consumption demand and, hence, growth in rural areas of the economy.

Recommendations of Committee on Financial inclusion

2375. SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE:

SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering a slew of measures to boost financial inclusion, taking off from the recommendation of the Committee on Financial inclusion;